

Robt. Jafford Hale

ENVY wishes, then believes.

Envy wishes AN

ORATION,

DELIVERED AT

Commencement,

HARVARD UNIVERSITY,

CAMBRIDGE,

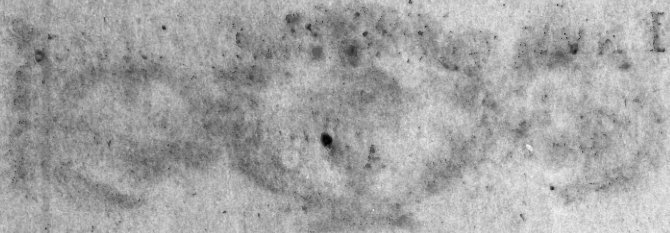
JULY 20th, 1796.

By LEONARD WOODS.



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AN
ORATION.

HARVARD, STOUGHTON, HOLLIS, HAN-
COCK, ALFORD, BOYLSTON, HERSEY, HUBBARD,
BOWDOIN, ERVING, CUMMINGS—To these dear
and ever honored men, and others, whom brevi-
ty forbids us to mention, we owe the origin, pros-
perity, and dignity of our college ; and of course
the entertainments and honors of this day. The
obligation between these men and us is mutual.
We are obliged to *them* for their liberality ; and
surely such generous souls, as theirs, feel obliged
to *us*, for affording them an opportunity to ex-
ercise their benevolence. HOLDEN and DERBY
are to be doubly honored. They are the glory
of their *sex*, and their *sex* is the glory of creation.
How happy are we to grace this catalogue of
benefactors with the beloved names of LETTSOME
and the French nation. Sincere thanks to wor-

thy individuals in our mother country. Thanks also to our *brothers in the toils of freedom*. May their moderation and humanity be equal to ours. May our zeal for *true* republicanism never be inferior to theirs.

HAIL, Harvard University ; not only benevolent Americans ; not only worthy individuals in our mother country ; but whole *nations*, nations of first dignity are engaged in thy cause. Surely the hopes of America can never be disappointed, while thy walls continue to be filled with learned and virtuous men, and while genius and industry are the staple commodity of our country.

TILL the successful labors of the present generation, the sons of Harvard wore the fetters of the *schools*. But now we have laid aside our mysterious reverence for the *ignorance* of antiquity, and begin to devote our attention to those useful discoveries, which exalt modern above antient times. Thanks to those, who first felt that they were oppressed and wounded by the shackles of false logic. Thanks to those brave soldiers, who fought against the tyranny of the schools, conquered the powerful forces of that despot, *prejudice*, and established the liberty of reason.

THE good effects of the present mode of education must be determined from the state of our country. America, more than is generally supposed, owes her liberty and good government to

her excellent system of instruction. Liberal knowledge gives dignity to the mind. Dignity of mind is always attended with a spirit of liberty. A spirit of liberty kindles republican virtue; and republican virtue is the only sure road to national wealth and happiness. We owe much to the natural state of our country. We owe much to the martial toils of our countrymen, who would not endure the weight of chains, nor the darkness of a dungeon. We owe much to that *angel*, who made the prison and gaoler tremble, took off our fetters, opened the prison door, and led us forth to light and independence. But we owe most of all to American education; to the simple manners, which it inculcates; to the noble virtue, which it inspires; and to that religion, which *pride* and *ignorance* most cordially reject.

THOUGH America be in herself glorious and happy; we shall think her still more so, if we take a view of other nations. This view, however short, will be sufficient to make us all rejoice that we are Americans.

IF we turn our eyes to *Africa*, we shall see a country stored with inexhaustible treasures; but we shall find the inhabitants afraid to accept the blessings of nature. Unhappy creatures. Their blackness of countenance is a *weak* emblem of their ignorance and wretchedness. As if they were not sufficiently unhappy, civilized nations

have conspired to make them still more so, by robbing them of *themselves*. Justice condemns, even benevolence and charity abhor those men, *who* trade in human flesh, *whose* souls are blacker, than the faces of their slaves. There are facts in store, which would chill our souls with horror; which would extinguish the stars; which would blacken the face of darkness; which make Satan envy the superior guilt of man. Let us make our escape from this wretched country, and hasten to *Asia*.

THOSE nations, which are duped by the deceptions of MAHOMET, all manifest the nature of their religion. They are born to cruelty, nurtured by human blood, luxurious in wickedness, and malicious, darkminded slaves to a tyrant, who is a slave to the prince of darkness. Indeed the Asiatic nations, almost without an exception, have no source of happiness, but the solaces of domestic life. Their religion is ignorance and impiety. They have worn the yoke of servitude so long, that it has grown to their necks.

As we pass, we drop a tear on *Poland*. We leave to her good king and general the happiness of great and benevolent souls, and our warmest vengeance on those, who basely stole her liberty.

Italy was once the seat of taste, science, free-

dom, and valor. But now the Italians are depraved, servile, insidious, indolent, extravagant, haughty, and revengeful, Oh, land of Romans, where is thy venerable senate? Where are thy orators, thy patriots, thy lovers of liberty, thy republican virtue, thy valiant and skillful commanders, thy glorious victories, thy triumphal moderation? All these, Italians, which were once realities, are to you the dreams of drowsy memory. The popes, those *holy* thieves, those pensioners of Satan, have exhausted your wealth and vigor, and now, on their *dying beds*, bequeath you nothing, but sensuality, superstition, and ignorance. Your *noble pride* leads you to boast a fire, which once burned, without considering that neither smoke, nor embers remain.

France is the torrid zone of liberty. Sudden, intense heat has scorched the whole nation. But we have reason to hope the climate is growing more temperate and salutary. We all wish the progress and establishment of true civil liberty. No price is too great for the purchase of freedom. Let the wounds of nature be probed to the bottom, and every necessary method taken, however severe, to obtain a perfect cure. We know that between *Aegypt* and *Canaan* there was a long journey through a wilderness of horrors. But who would decline a journey, that led from *Aegypt* to *Canaan*? None, but those, who wish to be tyrants, or are willing to be slaves.

THE prospects of the present and future ages are in many respects such, as philanthropy would desire. In this bright sunshine and warm season of liberty, tyrants will soon ripen; and then, like fruit, they will fall themselves, or we will shake them off.

BUT the Spaniards are still sunk in the dreams of midnight. A poor, indolent nation. Popery and superstition have smothered their reason. They have seen and handled too much gold, to be wise or virtuous. But liberty will awake. Liberty, who loves to see tyrants in chains, and despots in fetters of iron, will burst her confinement, and take bloody vengeance on the keepers of her prison.

IF any country have fostered the seeds of substantial freedom, it is *Great Britain*. If any nation have contributed infinitely to the progress of reason, taste, philosophy, and true religion, it is the British nation. If any individuals are an honor to a nation, they are *HAMDEN, MILTON, SYDNEY, LOCKE, CHATHAM, ERSKINE, GREY, FOX, and SHERIDAN*. These men, who hate war and corruption, and are sparing of the wealth and blood of the nation, are justly called lovers of their country. But notwithstanding the excellency of the English constitution, notwithstanding the greatness and virtue of individuals; pity

weeps over the people, while *allforgiving* charity finds many a stumbling block in the present administration. Will a spirited and free nation be always ruled by enemies? Will they always endure an adversary, who does not so much, as lay down his sword, while he grasps their money? Will they forever believe that strange maxim, that a national debt is a national benefit? Will they always be cheated with the mask of representation? Will they be always pleased with the naked deformities of despotism?—"We are your rulers. Our power is from God. Oh, ye subjects, stand ye at a distance. Our church and army, our pomp and splendor shall support us. We wisely manage affairs for *our own* advantage. Oh, humble subjects, keep your distance. Wo to the man, who enters the dark sanctuary of government with the profane light of *reason*." This is the emphatic language of administration, while the nation is starving, and bleeding at every vein. Oh, peace, peace, art thou fled forever? How long shall fainting Europe want thy reviving influence? How long shall ambition and obstinacy consume life, property, and freedom? Oh, exiled peace, is not the time of thy banishment almost expired; or art thou *dead* and *gone* forever? We ken the distant sail; we urge, hurry, blame the lagging winds, that keep from our ears

* See BARLOW'S Advice.

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the joyful news of peace. When will her enemies be silent? Oh, when will she return, and spread her healing wings over the bleeding nations of Europe?

WHILE we mourn the calamities of other nations, we will not forget our own. America is likewise suffering the desolation of war. We have a hundred thousand men tossed on the stormy ocean. Two hundred thousand of our dear countrymen are tempting the bloody contest in foreign lands. Every wind terrifies us with the news of furious battle; of thousands of our fellow citizens slain; of friends, sons, and fathers weltering in blood. We feel the oppressive weight of taxes. Every year adds twenty millions to our national debt. Farms are barren and waste for want of culture. We see orphans multiplied and widows in tears. We continually hear of our navies taken or sunk. We continually hear of fleets of enemies threatening our dear country. We dream of the thunder of cannon playing on our cities; we wake, and see our houses in flames.——Eternal glory to WASHINGTON, that this is all delusion.——While the wounds of one war were still bleeding, WASHINGTON's helmet of peace protected us from the wounds of another. He has done for us all in the power of man or angel. He has more, than died, for his country. He courts labor and fatigue, but retires from the voice of honor. Though

fast approaching the confines of human existence, his nerves of age are still strong. He is still as mighty, as he was, when he taught *Britain* the hard art of *submission*. In his morning and evening piety he prays, forgetting himself, "Father, oh give my country peace, happiness, and glory." But oh, cruel ingratitude ; oh, baseness. Shall he, who has done so much for our good ; whose life is almost wasted for his country ; shall he, whose retirement will make every good man weep ; whose death will array the *world* in the sable garb of mourning ; shall he, who never harbors a thought, but for the prosperity of his native land ; whose last sigh will be for our happiness ; shall he ? ——— oh, cursed envy, *marbleheaded monster*, vengeance and fury seize thee, and drive the *home* to the courts of darkness.

WHERE, alas, is the great and good man, that has not been abused ? Where the Roman patriot, that was not disgraced ? Where the Grecian savior, that had not his virtue attested and his glory established by exile ? We may therefore hold up to others this encouragement ; *if you will serve your country faithfully; if you will do more good, than any other man, you may expect, as a reward, enmity and scandal.*——If we look into any age or nation, we shall find that merit begat glory, glory begat envy, envy begat jealousy, jealousy begat falsehood, falsehood begat faction. Is not the case similar in our own country ? Is there not a most

illustrious character now on the stage? And is not sneaking envy shooting darts from behind the skreen?

SOME able statesmen may say, "how improper it is, that a *mere* son of Harvard pretend to say any thing about politics? How absurd to make a *weak* attempt to honor a man, when the very attempt will certainly disgrace him?"—Is this consistent with our republican government, which confirms to the subjects liberty of press and liberty of speech? Are we not Americans? Will it conduce to the honor of our *alma mater*, or to the good of our country to smother benevolence and gratitude in our breasts? Will it conduce to the pleasure of the audience to expatiate on the profits of the slave trade, the profits of the lumber trade, the profits of the fishing trade, the delights of agriculture, or even the beauties of knowledge, while all are wishing to hear the sky resound with the praises of our victorious warrior? What encouragement have we to treasure up true and virtuous sentiments, if the pride of monopolizing politicians, or the mistrust of jealous partizans suppress the emotions of gratitude and patriotism? In these factious times, when every man must join one party or the other, or be accused of having no sentiments, we expect not to escape reproach. But a man, who firmly loves truth,

neither *covets favor*, nor *fears dislike*. This independence prevents the intoxication of praise, and breaks the *sharpbiting* teeth of reproach. Let it be declared, to the pleasure of every one, who loves his country, and we all love our country, that the sons of Harvard, without an exception, unite in revering and applauding WASHINGTON. If any doubt this, let them recollect that, a few weeks ago, while the light of federalism shone in our minds, the glory of WASHINGTON, kindling in our walls, changed darkness to the splendor of noon. If any ask us why we esteem and honor WASHINGTON,——because he is of no party; equally despises monarchy and anarchy, as being equally inconsistent with the happiness of America; never hates liberty on account of others' immoderate zeal in its cause. We applaud him, because he never excited a faction, to raise himself to office; because he never longed to pilfer the laurel from the brow of merit; because ambition never made a prisoner of his reason; because the flames of envy have not consumed his virtue; party spirit has not turned his blood to gall; he never collected and inflamed an ignorant mob, whose names the gravest monk would laugh to read. We honor him, because he never filled his purse with the fruits of English or French corruption; because the fermentations of jealousy never burst his heart, to vent themselves on great and virtu-

mous characters; because he never thought of ascending to the clouds in a political whirlwind; because he rejoices, that the serpent, *antifederalism*, will soon breath its last gasp. We love him, because he loves liberty, peace, and economy; because he never cried, *bleed, bleed, my country; rise, oh, FACTION, rise, and I will be the HERO*—Thank Heaven, we have in *America* a man, who can be praised without adulation; whose conduct needs no favorites to approve, or pensioners to defend. But, Americans, we seldom consider how low human nature may descend. The time *may* come, when there will arise a race of monsters, covetous of glory, and successful enemies of peace, liberty, and WASHINGTON. Excursive imagination brings that far distant event before our eyes. Anarchy and faction have become omnipotent. Fiery demagogues prevail. The high priests of ambition are seated on the thrones, which they have long been seeking. There is no more gratitude for those, who have established, and wish to perpetuate republican liberty. The *black qualities* of our President have sunk him to the lowest grade in society. But those *black*

qualities are seen only by the *faith* of *envy*, which first *wishes*, then *believes*. Those, who have spent their fortunes and their lives in the service of their country, are thrust from their offices. Our good old lovers of freedom and religion are cruelly forgotten. Those, who have stabbed their country, are clothed with honor and power.—If ever this time come, may we all forget that we ever were free. If ever this time come, oh cruel RAMSAY, turn thy pen to a dagger, and write the baleful *history of the fall of America*. If ever this time come, come with it, oh *slinthearted insensibility*, kill every noble virtue. Make us blind to the beauty of innocence, indifferent to the smiles of the fair. And come, oh almighty ignorance, lay us silently down in the cold bosom of slavery.

CLASSMATES, the hour is come. This is the day, which we have so much dreaded, so much desired. We have been used to consider it, as far distant. But now we start, to see the many wings of Eagle time. This is our birth day. We are now ushered into life. Strange and cruel, that the day of our birth should separate us from our tender

parent, and from each other. Equal joy to the
sincere friend, and the generous enemy. Fare-
well, my classmates. The gravedigger, time,
shall never bury our friendship.

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